

TERMS OF THE DISPATCH.

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PITTSBURG, SUNDAY, DEC. 8, 1889.

CIRCUMSTANTIAL BUT IMPROBABLE.

How much dependence is to be placed upon the reported plans for the organization of a great international bank under the aegis of Pope Leo, at least, a debatable question. While a New York paper undertakes to give names of directors and details as to location, capital and manner of operation, with much semblance of particularity, the general tendency will be to await confirmation before accepting the report.

It is improbable the banking business can be conducted to advantage in connection with religious organizations. Experience has shown that the church organization in the United States in the conduct of financial enterprises on a great scale are not particularly encouraging. The experience of the publishing concerns of some of the Evangelical churches, and of Archbishop Purcell, at Cincinnati, were not hopeful in that regard. In this country, at least, ecclesiastical banking would scarcely be regarded as of great help either to any of the denominations or to the general business interests.

In this view it sounds rather absurd to hear that the pope's feast are expected by some of the leading New York financiers about the "vast political as well as financial influence" which would attach to the new enterprise. Neither politics nor business in the United States tend toward a denominational basis. And like as not, regardless of the circumstantiality of the account published by the New York Herald yesterday, it will be found that the plans of the reported new bank are more imaginary than real.

SMOKING FOR CLERGYMEN.

The discussion of the question, "Should Clergymen Smoke?" in another part of this issue, gives a variety of views on the subject which are more or less valuable as personal opinions. The logical way of determining the matter would be by first settling the prior question, "Should any man smoke?" and then governing the clergymen by the decision as to all mankind. The religious spirit and wrong for bankers and lawyers to smoke, then, it would be for clergymen to do so; if the former find it salutary or innocuous the clergymen have the same right to partake of a harmless enjoyment as other men; just as they have the same right to drink Java coffee or eat Saratoga potatoes. The question may be of importance just as it may be valuable to determine whether bankers should indulge in chicken salad or criminal lawyers eat mince pie. But the decision must apply to all humanity and not to any especial class or profession.

SILCOIT'S OBJECT LESSON.

If the vanished Silcott had planned his departure for the sole purpose of giving the statesmen with whom he enjoyed such confidential terms, an object lesson on the necessity of an amended extradition law, he could not have done it more completely. By deliberately skating along the edge of the extradition offenses, and paying back the money which he had obtained through forgeries, which might have brought him back, the departed Silcott is able to live in Canada comfortably on the salaries of the statesmen, and the fleeing Congressmen are left to profound reflections on the inadequacy of extradition.

It is an old principle that it gives a man the most thorough insight into an injury, to have his own ax ground; and the Congressmen whose cash accounts are depleted without any way of getting at the robber, will be deeply impressed with the wrong of public plunder. It is true that several thrifty legislators have already developed a theory that the United States must make up the loss. They may log-roll the measure through Congress, but nevertheless the discomforts of making the United States treasury pay their salaries twice over, on account of a loss of which their own agent was the cause, should make them eager for improved extradition laws, and create some fellow-feeling on their part with the people who supply the funds in the treasury.

Taking it all in all, a certain admiration at the originality of Silcott's stroke is irrepressible. Raids on the treasury have become commonplace in the House he served, and were by no means horrifying to some of the members thereof. But Silcott struck out a new line by raiding the private treasury of the Congressmen, and let in a flood of new light as to the possibilities of grabbing any funds that can be got at.

A CORPORATE BARTER.

A very striking example of corporate morals is exposed to public view in the history of a case just decided by the Wisconsin Supreme Court. One company made an agreement with another that if the latter would secure from the Legislature a valuable land grant, the first would give in return valuable track rights. The legislative lobbying was done successfully, and railroad No. 1 got its land grant; but when called upon to perform its half of the bargain refused to do it. The suit to make it do was thrown out by the courts on the ground that it was void as against public policy and tending to corruption in legal and moral aspect of the decision is indisputable; but it seems as if the criminal

courts might have something to say to the parties to such a bargain. In the meantime the corporations who dispose of legislative acts as a matter of barter, should have discretion enough to at least keep their contracts a secret.

FRANCE'S SCHEME OF TAXATION.

It appears from one of our cable specialties that the French Government proposes to adopt the measure agitated in this country last year, of imposing a capitation tax on all foreigners in France, and a further tax on all employers of foreign-born labor. The amount of taxation is not very large, being \$4.80 on the foreigners who do not work, and \$10 in addition on each laborer of other nationalities.

The measure may be a good one for a nation which desires to keep out foreigners. With regard to the money which will go to France to pay for the increased taxes, it has been that France desired their presence, and that they were already sufficiently taxed by the tradesmen, art dealers and hotel keepers. The tax on the laborers, on the other hand, will be heavy enough to exclude a great many such laborers or to force them into pauperism. But as labor is the creator of wealth, it does not seem a logical deduction either to shut it out or to force it into involuntary idleness at the expense of the public.

THE LUXURY OF DECADENCE.

Mrs. Frank Leslie's discussion of the growth of bachelor, or "Benedict," chambers in which the unmarried man is made comfortable for life without any thought of marriage, unfolds a very plausible and probably correct theory, as to the effect of wealth and luxury, in making social life selfish and consequently predisposing young men who wish to enjoy life untrammelled by family care, against marriage.

But it involves more than the question of matrimony when it is represented by a writer on social subjects, that it is the destiny, as a nation gains in wealth, that makes "capital become concentrated, rich men wealthier, poor men poorer, and labor less honorable." This has been the result in most cases of the excessive use of special privileges for certain classes; but to assert that it is inevitable, is to abandon the fundamental principles of our Government. The American Republic is founded on the belief that by giving all men equal chances the gain in wealth will be widely distributed; and while the old result is repeated in many cases, it is, in every case of egregious wealth, directly traceable to the fact that the principle of equality of opportunity and impartial treatment before the law, has been violated.

The story is not all told until it is pointed out that the stage of wealth and luxury, which produces the effects that Mrs. Leslie deplors, is only reached by the nullification of our democratic principles and generally by the violation of the laws.

BISHOP TUIG'S DEATH.

The death of Bishop Tuig at the episcopal residence yesterday removes the head of the Catholic Church in this diocese, who has had control of that powerful religious organization since the retirement of Bishop Domenece many years ago. The executive head of a large and centralized organization like the Catholic Church exerts a powerful influence in the community, and probably few men have exercised a greater effect on Pittsburgh's population, with so little prominence before the general public, as the late prelate. His administration of the diocese revealed a character in which a strong will, energetic temperament and decided convictions were leading features. Perhaps as just a measure of his work as can be found may be taken from the growth of the hospitals, colleges and seminaries supported by the Catholic denomination in this diocese, and in the enhancement of the numerical power and prosperity of his church.

STANLEY'S BELIEF IN PROVIDENCE.

One remarkable characteristic appears in the letters from Stanley, which have reached the world since he has emerged from the African wilds through which he conducted his great researches. That is his frank and unreserved avowal of his belief in the aid of an overruling and divine Providence which retained himself and his allies from the greatest dangers and enabled his expedition to win success through a series of dangers that at various times threatened to overwhelm it with total failure. Hardly any more complete or devout attribution of the credit for his achievements to a Higher Power is to be found, than the letter in which the successful explorer shows how the very disasters which layed him, worked out the successful results which were finally achieved.

This is the more remarkable because the character and temper of Stanley in his earlier career were not especially marked for devoutness. Self-reliant, determined, wary and courageous, he has heretofore seemed to hold the principle that Providence helps those who help themselves. That he has abandoned the belief in ways as well as that is not likely; but he has never before shown the religious spirit so prominently. It would almost seem that as Stanley is heretofore enlarged Dr. Livingston's mission of opening up the dark places of Africa, so he has succeeded to the missionary explorer's earnest and constant faith. Possibly, the spirit may have its origin in his intercourse with Livingston on his first expedition, when the patient inspiration of the older man was steadily leading him to his lonely death in the effort to solve the mystery of the Louisa.

Yet in view of the fact that Stanley's companions with Livingston labored but a few months, and died a martyr whose name may not this devout belief be cherished, the influence which surrounded the efforts of both explorers. Many are not something in the struggle with the forces of nature, the observation of savage life, and the pursuit of heroic efforts remote from the centers of civilization and the competition of "enlightened selfishness" which teaches the ardent mind that Providence is over all, and that human weakness is strongest in its reliance on a Supreme Being?

There is certainly a strong commentary on the theory of the religious spirit which it is in our chairs and elaborate monastic theories, that men of such heroic achievements as Stanley and Livingston are by the year record of their struggles brought to a clear belief in the existence of Divine Providence.

There are news from New York that the baby hypochondriac recently added to the population of that city had died because Jesus could not stand the climate. Chicago will be slow to draw the moral of the obvious impropriety of asking the town to come and enjoy an international exposition in a climate that is a moat for a young river boy.

Then and remark is made by the Minneapolis Pioneer Press with regard to the light behavior of some of the members of Congress

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